

In the Claims:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Cancelled)

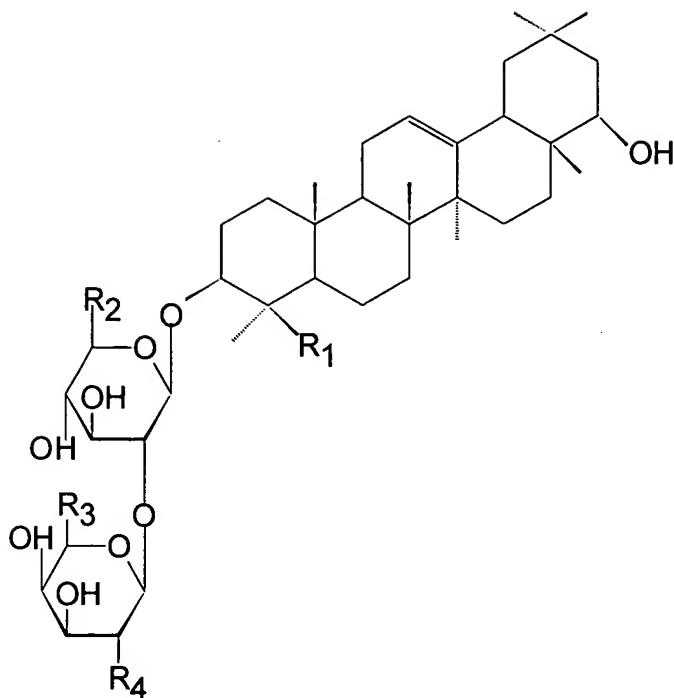
6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

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8. (Currently Amended) The [agent] method of Claim [7] 10, wherein R₁ is CH₂OH or CH₃; R₂ is COOH or COOMe; R₃ is CH₂OH or H; and R₄ is rhamnose or galactose.

9. (Currently Amended) The [agent] method of Claim [7] 10, wherein the saponin of formula (I) is selected from soyasaponin I, soyasaponin II, kaikasaponin III, soyasaponin V and soyasaponin I-Methyl.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of inhibiting sialyltransferase, which comprises [using the saponin derivative as defined in claim 1] contacting the sialyltransferase with a saponin derivatives of general formula (I) or the pharmaceutically acceptable salts and esters thereof:



wherein

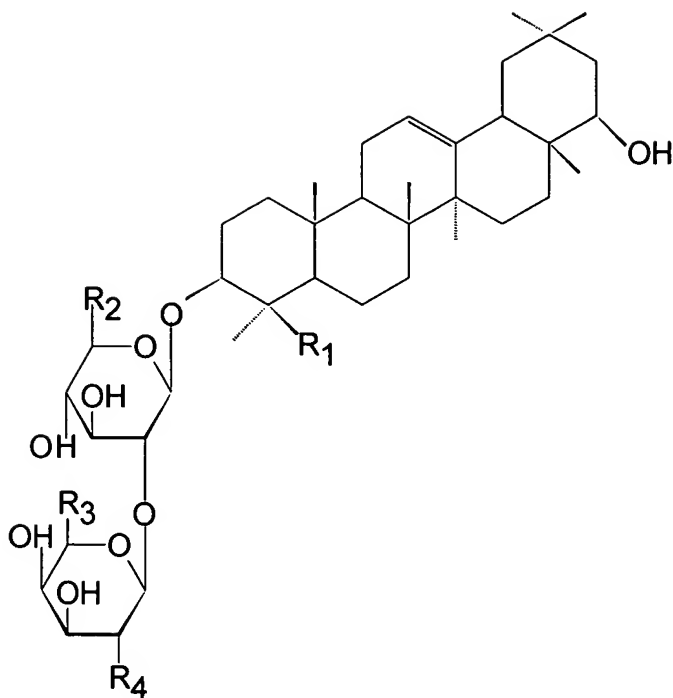
R₁ is hydrogen, C₁₋₈ alkyl, C₂₋₆ alkenyl, C₂₋₆ alkynyl, or C₁₋₈ alkylhydroxy;

R₂ is hydrogen, C₁₋₈ alkyl, C₂₋₆ alkenyl, C₂₋₆ alkynyl, COOH, COOC₁₋₈alkyl;

R₃ is C₁₋₈ alkylhydroxy, hydrogen, C₁₋₈ alkyl, C₂₋₆ alkenyl or C₂₋₆ alkynyl;

R₄ is OH or X_m, wherein X is pentose or hexose residue or their derivatives; and
m is 0, 1, 2 or 3.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of treating the conditions associated with the sialyltransferase, which comprises administration of [a sialyltransferase inhibitor agent of the invention] the saponin derivatives of the general formula (I) to a patient suffering from, or susceptible to, such a condition, said general formula (I) having the formula:



wherein

R₁ is hydrogen, C₁₋₈ alkyl, C₂₋₆ alkenyl, C₂₋₆ alkynyl, or C₁₋₈ alkylhydroxy;

R₂ is hydrogen, C₁₋₈ alkyl, C₂₋₆ alkenyl, C₂₋₆ alkynyl, COOH, COOC₁₋₈alkyl;

R₃ is C₁₋₈ alkylhydroxy, hydrogen, C₁₋₈ alkyl, C₂₋₆ alkenyl or C₂₋₆ alkynyl;

R₄ is OH or X_m, wherein X is pentose or hexose residue or their derivatives; and

m is 0, 1, 2 or 3.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the condition is selected from inflammation, allergy, infection by pathogens, oncogenesis, cancer, metastasis, and invasion caused by sialyltransferases.

13. (Original) The method of Claim 12, wherein the condition is selected from cancer, metastasis and invasion.